WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A process for preparing partly hydrophobic metal oxide particles, which comprises silylating metal oxide particles with

I) an organosilane of the formula

$$R^1_nSiX_{4-n}$$

where n is 1, 2 or 3

or mixtures of these organosilanes,

R^1 being a monovalent, optionally halogenated hydrocarbon radical having 1 to 24 carbon atoms, being identical or different at each occurrence, and being saturated, aromatic, monounsaturated, or polyunsaturated,

X each independently being halogen, a nitrogen radical, OR^2, $OCOR^2$, or $O(CH_2)_xOR^2$,

R^2 being hydrogen or a monovalent hydrocarbon radical having 1 to 12 carbon atoms, and

x being 1, 2 or 3;

or

II) an organosiloxane composed of units of the formula

$$(R^1_3SiO_{1/2}), \text{ and/or}$$

$$(R^1_2SiO_{2/2}), \text{ and/or}$$

$$(R^1SiO_{3/2})$$

where R^1 is as defined above, or mixtures thereof,

the number of these units in one organosiloxane being at least 2; and I and II being used alone or in any desired mixtures in a total amount of from 0.015 mmol/g to 0.15 mmol/g per 100 m^2/g of metal oxide BET surface area measured by the BET method in accordance with DIN 66131 and 66132.

2. The process of claim 1, wherein the metal oxide comprises a pyrogenic metal oxide.

3. The process of claim 1, wherein the metal oxide is fluidized during silylation.

4. The process of claim 1, wherein the metal oxide comprises silica.

5. The process of claim 4, wherein the metal oxide comprises pyrogenic silica.

6. The process of claim 1, wherein the reaction comprises the steps of (1) loading metal oxide with silylating agent(s) at a temperature of 20°C to 120°C to form a metal oxide and silylating agent mixture, (2) reacting the metal oxide and silylating agent mixture at a temperature of 50°C to 330°C to form a partly silylated metal oxide, and (3) purifying the partily silylatd metal oxide at a temperature of 290°C to 340°C.

7. A partly hydrophobic silica whose particles have a contact angle θ in air for water of less than 180°, the degree of coverage τ of the surface of the silica with silylating agent residues, based on the total silica particle surface area, being $1\% < \tau < 50\%$, the density of the surface silanol groups SiOH ranging between a minimum of 0.9 and a maximum of 1.7 SiOH/nm^2 particle surface area, and the particles having a carbon content of less than 0.1% by weight and up to 20% by weight, and a methanol number of less than 30.

8. An additive for controlling the rheology of liquid and pulverulent systems, which comprises a silica of claim 7.

9. An additive for controlling the rheology of liquid and pulverulent systems, which comprises a silica prepared by the process of claim 1.

10. A toner or developer which comprises a silica as claimed in claim 7.

11. A toner or developer which comprises a silica as claimed in claim 9.

12. An emulsion which comprises a silica as claimed in claim 7.

13. An emulsion which comprises a silica as claimed in claim 9.

14. The emulsion of claim 12, which comprises no emulsifier other than said silica.